VOLUME 1 - NO. 5 AUGUST 1993

The Low Band Monitor

Editor Discovers Low Band Propagation Secret
Send Your Radio In For Service

The first few weeks of August were the absolute peak of the doldrums on the low frequency bands in this part of the world. The static was high, no DXpeditions, and very few surprises anywhere.

In talking to friends all over the continent, it was obvious that now was the time to send the trusty transceiver back to the factory for some alignment work before the DX season gets started.

The four to six week turn around would be adequate to be without a radio. The days of owning three to four transceivers being over, I could listen on the bands for news with my *Sony* and do some overdue antenna work.

This strategy appeared to be sound for a few days and then...

Local Gun Goes to Ghana!

Randy, K0EU advised the locals that he would possibly have a three week work assignment in Ghana, but due to the short time available to make licensing arrangements, would probably not be able to operate.

Then on August 29, at 0104 UTC (that's daylight in Colorado) folks, KY0A spots 9G1XA at 3.505 mz. working everyone on the 80 meter band who owns at least a *KnightKit Star Roamer*, *HeathKit DX-60* and a dipole at twenty feet.

Subsequent spots by K1ER and W0CP on following days show a solid signal at 3.505 mz. every day at around 0100 UTC and some nights at his sunrise around 0515 UTC.

You can imagine my delight in being able to copy 9G1XA on 80 meters, with the 30 inch telescoping antenna of the Sony, but this doesn't help your band totals.

Twelve Hour Work Days

The first few days of Randy's operation have been unique in that he is only able to operate during his non-working time. This has confused some DXer's, but should not present a problem to those who are diligent.

His weekend sessions have been impressive with the "who's who" of DXing being heard in the 40, 80 and 160 meter pileups.

The evening of September 5 was exciting to observe as a bump in the Boulder "A" index clued a number of DXers to get Randy to move to the 160 meter band at around 0130 UTC.

What a pileup! The top 160 meter DXers in the world could be found calling at 1.830 mz and higher. 9G1XA was audible across most of North America!

Those like me who have their Beverage antennas in storage were probably tempted to put them back up a few months early.

This operation will probably be the one to officially begin what we call the "Low Band Season".

Charles In Charge

Charles Summers, KY0A of Colorado connected with Randy on 160 meters on September 5th, by calling low at 1.829.7 mz. The exchange went something like this. Isn't 160 meters a fun band!

9G1XA: KY0A 5-9-9 K
KY0A: QSL 5-5-9 5-5-9 DE KY0A
9G1XA: KY0A QRM AGN RPT BK
KY0A: R R 5-5-9 5-5-9 5-5-9 DE KY0A
9G1XA: QRM QRM QRM RPT AGN KY0A KN KN
KY0A: R R 5-5-9 5-5-9 5-5-9 DE KY0A
9G1XA: R R R QSL TU DE 9G1XA UP

That's a memorable 160 meter contact, as it is the farthest west that 9G1XA has worked so far on that band. Any challengers to this claim.

If you are in Randy's 160 meter log, you have worked one of the world's rarer countries.

Randy's stay may be extended for a few days so keep the faith. Perhaps another 160 meter opening will occur like the one on September 5th.

More Activity From St Paul Island

The CY9R, St Paul operation also made a number of DXers happy in early September with solid signals on 40 and 80 meters. Many of us worked the CY9CF operation a few years ago but have not received QSL's . This St. Paul operation is a nice surprise. No 160 meter operation reported as of September 7, 1993.

Weak signals from CY9R have been reported on the East coast, but it appears that the Toronto group has run into bad propagation 160 meters.

Wake Island

AH9B and AH6ML/NH9 and other Wake Island calls have been active in early September with the first 160 meter spot (KY0A) being reported on September 6th at 1000 UTC calling Japan, but listening for occasional stateside calls.

This operations 75 and 80 meter signals have been outstanding, but it is obvious that they too are seeing generally poor 160 meter conditions at this time.

One station from Texas has been on three straight mornings trying to get a 160 meter QSO with no success. I do admire his determination - the 160 meter gods can be cruel.

Mellish Reef Coming Soon

Received a nice telephone call from VK4CRR at 4:10 am, to advise that he will be leaving for Mellish Reef in four days. The operation is moving along as planned, with low band activity being a big priority for this highly experienced group.

The *Low Band Monitor* has been mailing letters to known low band DXers all over the world in an attempt to develop more insight for our readers.

The first one hundred letters went out during the month of August with more to follow this fall.

Now, if I can just get my radio back from service in a few days, maybe I'll be able to join you in the pileups.

I only missed three band countries so far!

Lance Johnson - Editor

Casio Data Bank DC-7500

A Poor Man's Lap Top Computer - Under $30.00

Editors Note - If you are looking for an inexpensive product that will help you organize your HF band needs this product might be for you. It may even help you organize your life.

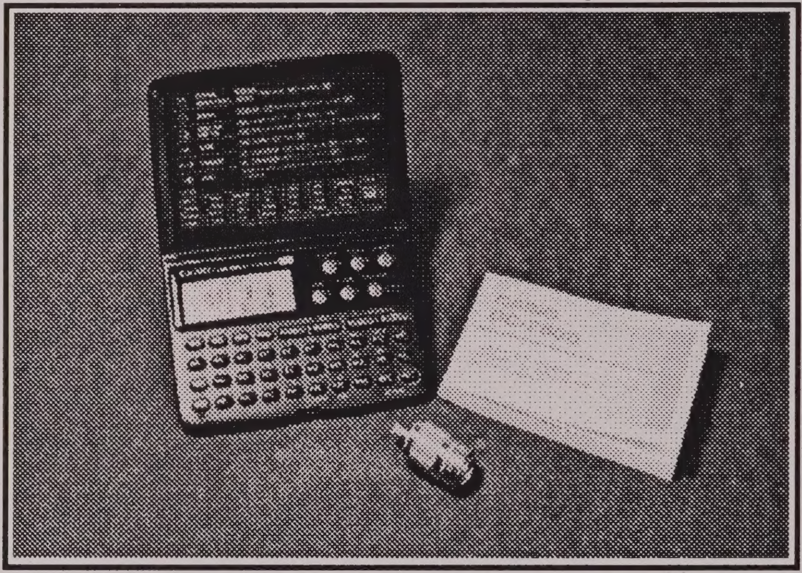
One of my hobbies is attending Las Vegas trade shows. The Consumer Electronics Show (C.E.S.) and the Fall COMDEX computer show are my favorites. You get to see the giants of each industry introduce their new products to the buyers a few weeks before the items are on the shelves for the typical consumer.

Las Vegas has the best food and lodging values in the world and as long as you don't lose control at the blackjack table or in one of the sports bars (never mention the Denver Bronco's) you can normally come away with some good information.

Over the years I have been intrigued with the group of products that fall in the "personal organizer" category. Typically, these products have the ability to let you store data for retrieval like a customer list, a Christmas card list, or your friends phone numbers.

I have probably owned four or five of these devices. The most interesting was a *Seiko* product that you wore as a wristwatch. You would take the watch off and dock it to a small keyboard for data entry. The keyboard also had a small printer that would enable you to get a printout of your data.

The concept was great, but their display was extremely difficult to read, particularly in a car, so this promising concept was promptly sold at the first available hamfest.



Here is the Casio DC-7500 and a PL-259.
This unit would be a perfect companion on a DXpedition.

At the last C.E.S. I discovered a personal organizer that seemed to offer some features that would appeal to the DXer. This product has just recently been introduced at retail locally and merits some discussion.

This product is called the *Casio* Data Bank DC-7500. Before I go any further lets advise you of the price for this unit is $24.95 -$27.95, depending on the retailer. We are not talking a major expense here.

This pocket sized product is set up to handle 500 data entries and uses an easy to read three line display. The DC-7500 also has some features that would probably impress the low band Dxer.

- **Clock with World Time Function** - It has the ability to give you the local time, day, date and year, but also has instant access to time in 29 time zones and 27 different cities.

As I am writing this article I press the time button (11:01 am Thursday local time), I press C and find out that it's 2:01 am in Hong Kong, but it's already Friday. I press S and see that it's 8:06 pm in Cairo and it's Thursday again.

The cities chart is directly above the display and it includes a UTC key. You also have your choice of 12 or 24 hour time format.

- **Alarm Function** - The DC-7500 has a built in buzzer that will buzz for 20 seconds when the preset alarm time is reached. You can also set the buzzer to chime every hour on the hour.
- **Schedule Function** - You can enter a series of activities at random and the DC-7500 will automatically sort them in order of occurrence upon recall.
- **Conversion Function** - This key allows you to store up to four different conversion numbers for future access and use with the DC-7500 (non-scientific) calculator.

The ambitious owner could utilize the DC-7500 in the following manner.

1. DXCC Country Totals - Load the country prefix and name abbreviation (only 325) in the first line of the display. Now, if you want to manage all HF bands simply enter the needed band countries in the remaining two lines. Remember that the first line of the display will support alpha characters (EA - SPAIN), while the second and third lines only support numeric (10-15- - -80-160) data.

2. Single Band Log Data - Load the call sign and name for the station worked on the first line and the frequency, date, time, report and mode data on the other two lines.

3. Geographic Data - It would be possible to maintain a database of CQ zone, ITU zone, or even latitude/longitude info with a little bit of imagination.

4. DXpedition Tool - Antenna dimensions, schedules, special frequencies, amplifier settings, camera data and generator parameters could easily be stored in the database. The unit is rated for use in the 32° F - 104°F range, so it would certainly be suitable for just about anywhere except South Sandwich Is.

5. VHF - UHF Data - If you add satellites, VUCC grid data or even moon bounce work to the equation, the possibilities for utilizing the Casio DC-7500 are almost endless. A good start would be to manage your 5 Band WAS totals, as only fifty data entries are needed.

Owners of laptop computers are probably laughing at the suggestion of using such a simple electronic device for archiving DX data, when obviously better technology is readily available.

At $27.95 you can probably do 50 percent of what a thousand dollar laptop will do. At worst the DC-7500 would give your laptop's batteries some needed relief and the DC-7500 weighs all of 3.0 ounces. Have you seen any laptops that you can store in your shirt pocket and weigh less than a quarter pound?

Speaking of batteries, the DC-7500 has a novel "LOW BATTERY" function that tells you that the 2 year cell (assuming one hour of use per day) has low voltage. This message will switch you over to the second, backup battery, which will last for one more year. If you change the batteries (Lithium CR2025) separately, your data will be retained.

The *Casio* DC-7500 is packaged with a 215 page Operation Manual. Before you panic, note that one third of the pages are in English, while the other two thirds are replications of the English version written in Spanish and French respectively.

BY - CHINA
10 - 15 - 20 - 40 -   -
24

KH6 - HAWAII
10 - 15 - 20 - 40 - 80 -160
31

Here are two country confirmed examples above for China and Hawaii. Last line is CQ Zone.

YURI 160M SKED
10-30   13:30

Appointment schedule above will be sorted for you in order.

MO   TYO
1993 - 8 - 10
14:24   53

This is how the time is displayed for the city of Tokyo, Japan. City codes are etched on the case!

P I
3.1417

Special memory buffer is available for storing four conversion factors

The DC-7500 is very easy to use. The average owner should be able to master most of the functions in less than an hour. This is an excellent unit for persons who travel and need to have an immediate access to a large number of domestic and international telephone or FAX numbers.

The low band DXer, who has a little bit of creativity, will also find the DC-7500 to be a useful band data reference tool and a more than adequate (+- 3.0 seconds per day) time piece.

The DC-7500 is made by Casio Computer Company, Ltd., using C-MOS LSI technology and is available in most consumer electronics stores that sell calculators.

SPOT OF THE MONTH CLUB WINNERS FOR AUGUST 1993

WIN AN EXTRA MONTH'S SUBSCRIPTION!

KY0A
CT1AOZ - 1.834 - 0527Z - 4 SEPT
N0BIW
AH9B - 3.792 - 1149Z - 3 SEPT
KD7SO
5R8DG - 7005.0 - 0320Z - 5 AUG

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TR-4 Transceiver 80 - 10m with AC-4
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Factory Assembled. Excellent
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286 AT with Phoenix Bios
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Steve - K0CS
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Two years old. Stainless hardware.
30 foot boom. $650.00
Doc - KN8Z
(614) 837-1460

Is An Icom IC-751A Good Value?

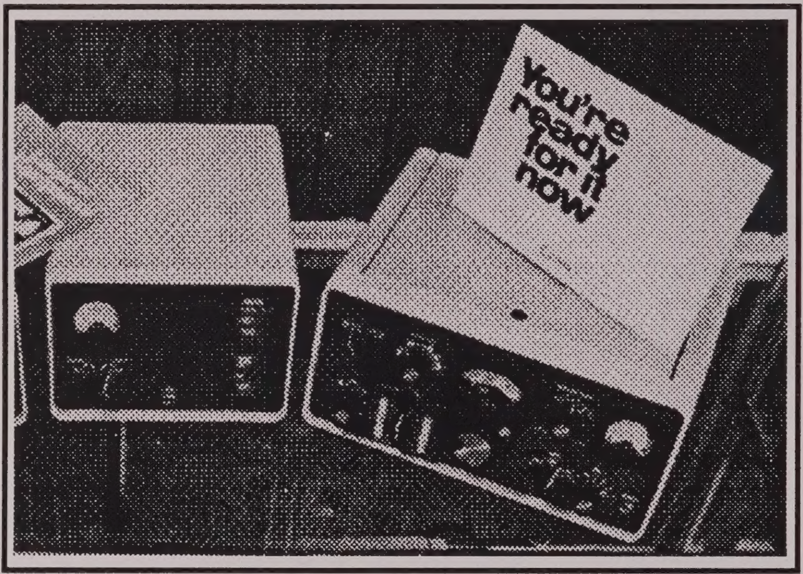
A Look Back To 1977 - by K0CS

Editor's Note: The Icom IC-751A Transceiver was recently discontinued by Icom of America. Derived from the earlier IC-740 and IC-745, this radio, with the PS-35 power supply installed gave the DXpeditioner the most efficient carry-on HF system ever conceived.

Did you see the advertisements? Did you see the prices? Did you buy one? I hope that you did. The recently ended closeout of the *Icom 751A* transceiver at $999.95 with a $50.00 rebate was quite simply the best HF value ever offered to the amateur in the history of this hobby!

Some dealers even chose to move out the PS-35 internal power supply at under $149.95, with the purchase of an *Icom IC-751A* transceiver.

The *Icom IC-751A* is a fine radio. The key to the units performance was the factory installed FL-44A (2nd IF) 2.1 Mz. SSB filter, that was originally a $200.00 option on most of the earlier *Icom* transceivers.



LET'S STEP BACK INTO 1977 AND BUY A FINE TRANSCEIVER WITH FEATURES SIMILAR TO THE ICOM IC-751A
LOOK AT THE SIGN - ARE YOU READY?

The *IC-751A* also offered additional optional CW filters, with the FL-52A, (2nd IF) 500 Hz CW filter being very popular for low band work.

Considering the dual VFO's, memory capability, general coverage receiver and superior portability, the *IC-751A* will certainly be remembered as one of the best transceivers of all time.

Recently a new ham asked me if I thought that the *Icom IC-751A* represented "good value".

That is a good question. What is "good value"? To define "value" or any utilitarian type function, it is probably wise to look at the end points, the top and the bottom, so that one can get a general feel for what defines the term itself.

I feel that the *Icom 751A* is "good value", but what transceiver would define the other end of the value spectrum? Lets turn the calendar back to 1977 and look at the *Rockwell International, Collins Radio Group, KWM-2A* transceiver. Perhaps this exercise will help the new ham understand a little bit more about the term "value".

It will also make you appreciate your current equipment a lot more.

Lets say that you are at the 1977 Dayton Hamvention™ in April and you want to take the step into the *Collins* fine line of amateur equipment. You are a successful product engineer for a leading Fortune 500 company and you decide to reward yourself for years of hard work with a fine ham radio product. One of the dealers with a booth there has a fine reputation and inventory, *Amateur Electronic Supply* of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

As a *Collins* dealer, he is able to show you exactly what you need and he will even accept VISA and MasterCard.

Ray, the astute salesman, begins his presentation with the recommendation that your *KWM-2A* transceiver should have the *136B-2* noise blanker factory installed, so that you will not be bothered with installing it yourself. A wise choice, and he rings up $4427.00.

Your wife asks the salesman (god bless her) if she will be able to listen to *Radio Nederland* broadcast her favorite Bach fugues on the short wave listening bands. He advises her that the *KWM-2A* is not configured to do that, but that a fine separate receiver called the *51S-1* is available that will provide her with this capability for $4770.00 and for $560.00 more you can add a *55G-1* preselector that will improve the clarity. After some discussion, the SWL receiver is added. A nice gesture, as you wanted her and the kids to eventually get involved with your hobby.

A power supply is a must for the *KWM-2A*, so you select the workhorse *516F-2*, AC supply for $440.00.

A remote VFO, wattmeter, speaker and phone patch is necessary for your split operation with the *KWM-2A*, so you add the extremely functional *312B-5* accessory at $1212.00.

Since you operate mobile occasionally, you also choose the *MP-1* DC power supply at $660.00, but decide to pass on the *351D-2* mobile mount at $731.00 as you will set the *KWM-2A* on the front seat of the car.

Ray advises you that he is almost finished, but he wants to make sure that you have a *440E-1* power supply cable at $116.00 for your mobile supply. A nice move by Ray as this cable is important!

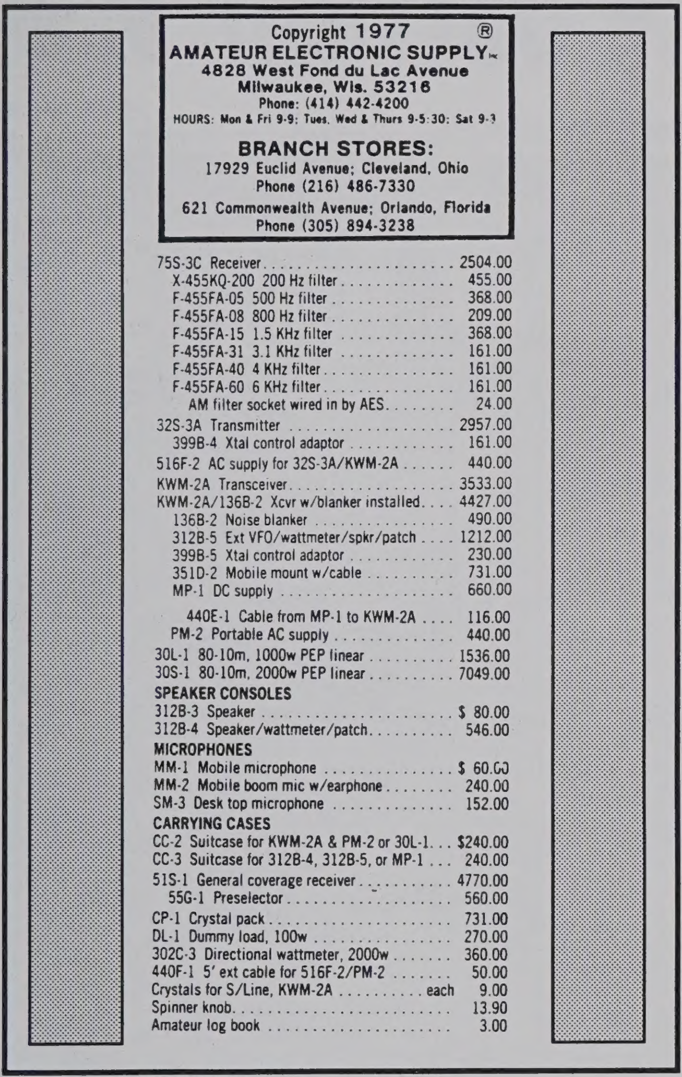
The invoice is finalized with the addition of a matching *SM-3* microphone at $152.00 and an accessory crystal at $9.00 for (ahem) monitoring Citizens Band when you are traveling. It's 1977!

Your invoice is totaled and you come up with a sum of $12,185.00 for the *Collins KWM-2A* system and accessories.

Ray advises you that their are no discounts on *Collins* equipment, but reminds you that you have saved a small fortune in sales tax by purchasing the unit out of state.

You make out a check for $12,185.00 and hand it to the salesman, who says that the units will be shipped to you as soon as the check clears. As a gesture of good will, Ray hands you a beautiful *Collins* log book at no charge and shakes your hand.

You are ecstatic! You have finally joined the ranks of those who own the finest amateur radio equipment on earth - *Collins*. The only drawback is you won't be able to operate on the 160 meter band, but you already have plans for a nice transverter on your desk at home.



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75S-3C Receiver	2504.00
X-455KQ-200 200 Hz filter	455.00
F-455FA-05 500 Hz filter	368.00
F-455FA-08 800 Hz filter	209.00
F-455FA-15 1.5 KHz filter	368.00
F-455FA-31 3.1 KHz filter	161.00
F-455FA-40 4 KHz filter	161.00
F-455FA-60 6 KHz filter	161.00
AM filter socket wired in by AES	24.00
32S-3A Transmitter	2957.00
399B-4 Xtal control adaptor	161.00
516F-2 AC supply for 32S-3A/KWM-2A	440.00
KWM-2A Transceiver	3533.00
KWM-2A/136B-2 Xcvr w/blanker installed	4427.00
136B-2 Noise blanker	490.00
312B-5 Ext VFO/wattmeter/spkr/patch	1212.00
399B-5 Xtal control adaptor	230.00
351D-2 Mobile mount w/cable	731.00
MP-1 DC supply	660.00
440E-1 Cable from MP-1 to KWM-2A	116.00
PM-2 Portable AC supply	440.00
30L-1 80-10m, 1000w PEP linear	1536.00
30S-1 80-10m, 2000w PEP linear	7049.00
SPEAKER CONSOLES	
312B-3 Speaker	$ 80.00
312B-4 Speaker/wattmeter/patch	546.00
MICROPHONES	
MM-1 Mobile microphone	$ 60.00
MM-2 Mobile boom mic w/earphone	240.00
SM-3 Desk top microphone	152.00
CARRYING CASES	
CC-2 Suitcase for KWM-2A & PM-2 or 30L-1	$240.00
CC-3 Suitcase for 312B-4, 312B-5, or MP-1	240.00
51S-1 General coverage receiver	4770.00
55G-1 Preselector	560.00
CP-1 Crystal pack	731.00
DL-1 Dummy load, 100w	270.00
302C-3 Directional wattmeter, 2000w	360.00
440F-1 5' ext cable for 516F-2/PM-2	50.00
Crystals for S/Line, KWM-2A each	9.00
Spinner knob	13.90
Amateur log book	3.00

You stop at the snack bar to share the details of your purchase with an old friend. Roger, who has a background in banking and has CPA credentials from the *Alfred P. Sloan School of Management* at *M.I.T.*

Roger is a Dayton Hamvention™ regular who has managed to work DXCC with an old, slightly modified *Eico 753* transceiver.

He advises, "I would have put the money into long term certificates of deposit." "Jimmy Carter has got the interest rate into double digits, you can really get a nice return on your money."

"You only live once," you exclaim, laughing along with your wife, as you munch on a chili dog.

Roger responds, "Even at a 7 percent return on investment, you could build up a nice nest egg with the *Collins* purchase funds.

"Ham radio gear goes up in price every year; look at *Drake, Swan, and Tempo*", you respond.

"Some day, say in 1992 or 1993 I'll bet you could use the money," says Roger.

"Roger, I have a Masters Degree from *Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute*, I work for *IBM*, and I'm working on a product called the XT, I'm not going to get upset over a few dollars," you say, "I'll pay for the *Collins* gear with part of my annual bonus."

You and your wife laugh at Roger as he walks off into the crowd. "Some people just don't understand the big picture, you exclaim.

Collins Purchase 1977 & $12,185.00 System Comparable to Icom IC-751A (Interest at 7 percent per year)

YEAR	PRINCIPAL	VALUE
1977	12,185	12,185
1978	12,185	13,038
1979	12,185	13,951
1980	12,185	14,927
1981	12,185	15,972
1982	12,185	17,090
1983	12,185	18,286
1984	12,185	19,566
1985	12,185	20,936
1986	12,185	22,401
1987	12,185	23,968
1988	12,185	25,648
1989	12,185	27,443
1990	12,185	29,364
1991	12,185	31,419
1992	12,185	33,619
1993	12,185	35,972

I have included a table with this article, to see what the current value of a *Collins* purchase of $12,185.00 is in 1993, using 7 percent interest.

Do you think that the *Icom 751A* represents "good value" now?

The *Collins S Line* and *KWM-2* also represented "good value" to many satisfied owners around the world, including Curtis Lamay. If they didn't represent "good value", they simply would not have sold successfully for almost two decades.

Collins equipment is still in use today and is cherished by those who own it.

Perhaps we have discovered that there is more to the meaning of "value" than the obvious financial numbers assigned to a product.

Then again, maybe there isn't! By the way, Ray shipped he gear freight collect!

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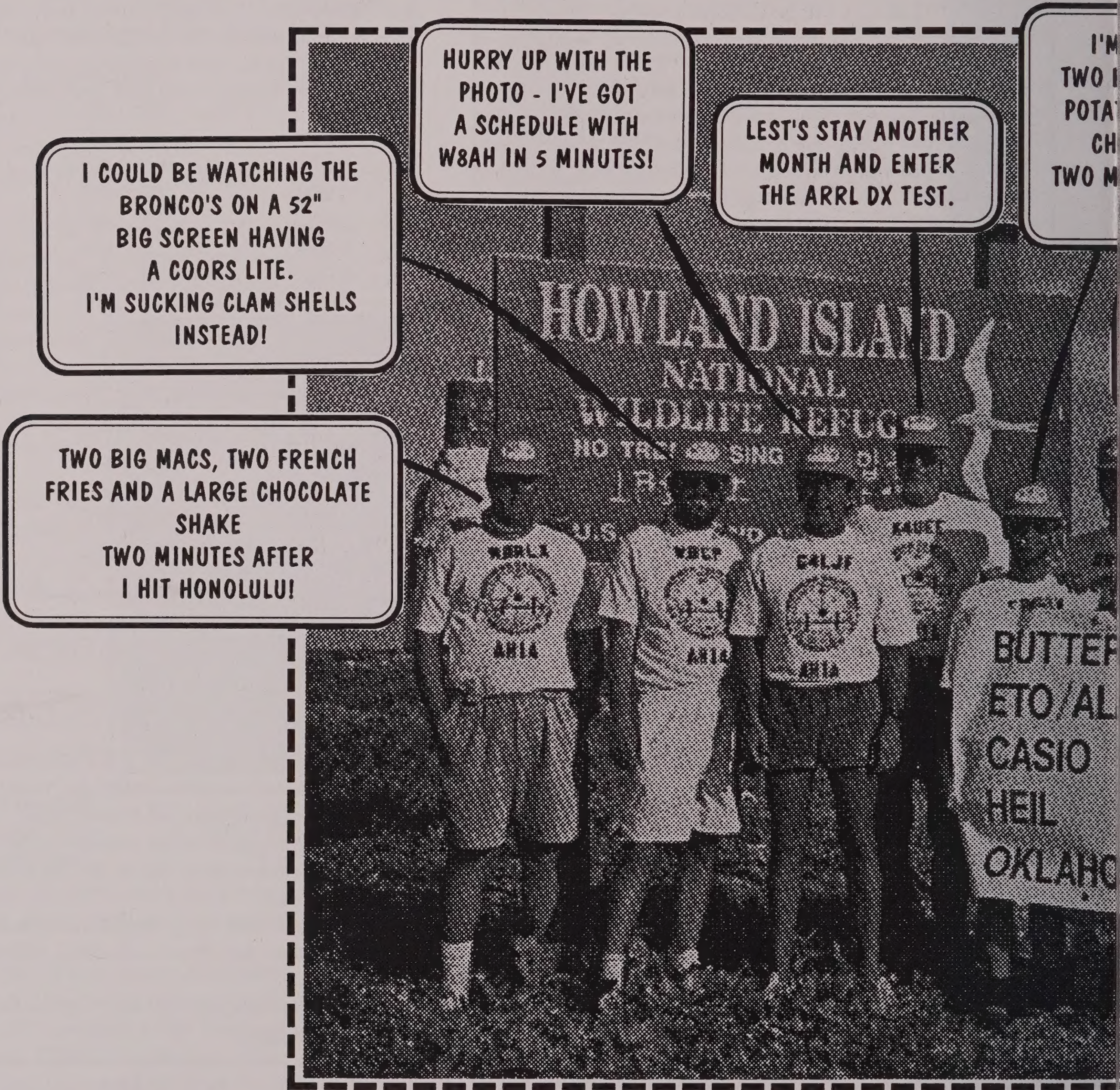
What Was Really On Their Minds


I COULD BE WATCHING THE BRONCO'S ON A 52" BIG SCREEN HAVING A COORS LITE. I'M SUCKING CLAM SHELLS INSTEAD!
HURRY UP WITH THE PHOTO - I'VE GOT A SCHEDULE WITH W8AH IN 5 MINUTES!
LEST'S STAY ANOTHER MONTH AND ENTER THE ARRL DX TEST.
I'M TWO POTA CH TWO M
TWO BIG MACS, TWO FRENCH FRIES AND A LARGE CHOCOLATE SHAKE TWO MINUTES AFTER I HIT HONOLULU!
HOWLAND ISLAND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
W0RLX
W0CP
G4LJF
AH1A
BUTTER
ETO/AL
CASIO
HEIL
OKLAHO

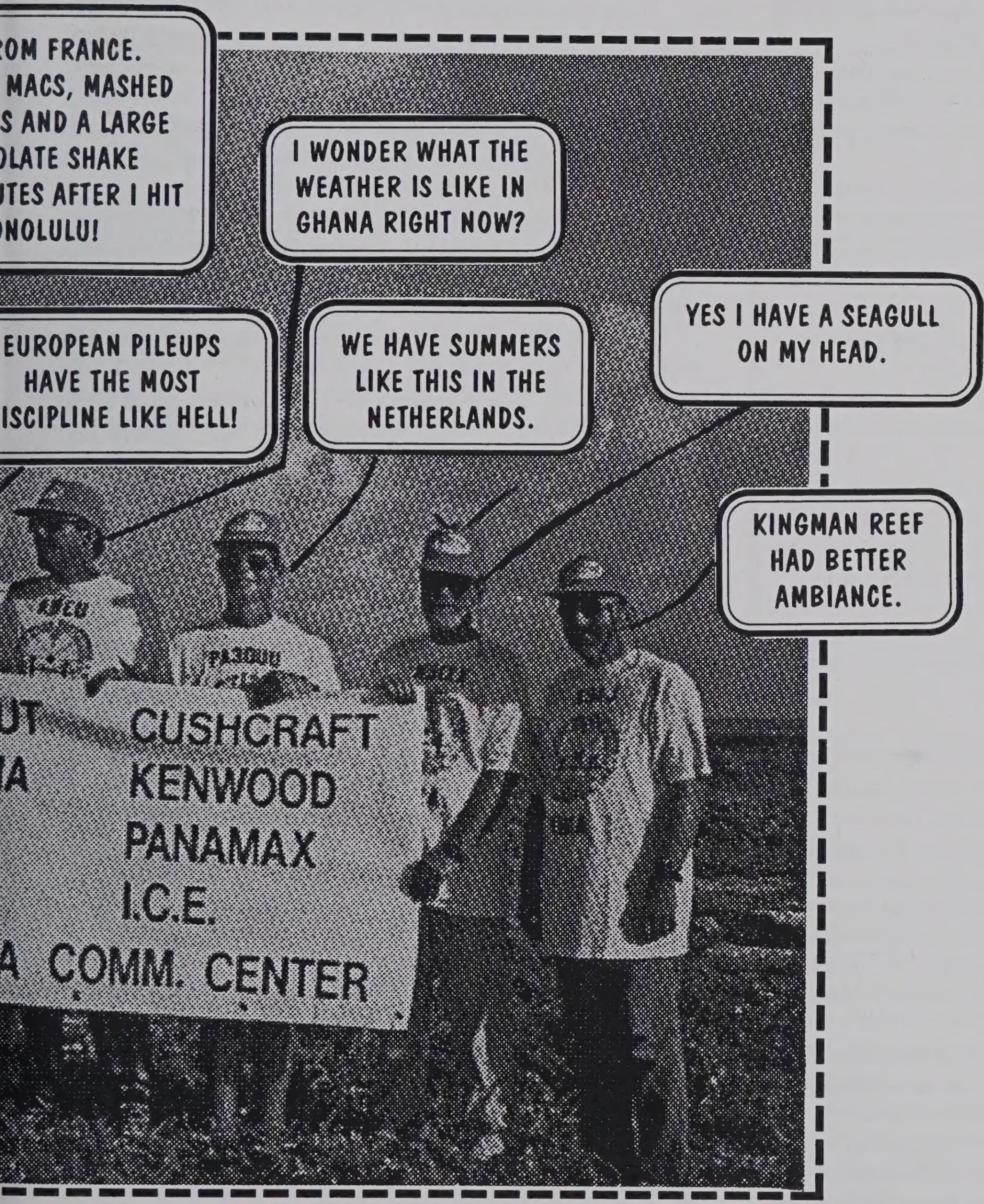
AH1A OPERATORS: From L. to R. - W0RLX, W0CP, G4LJF

OVER 10,000 Lo

A Low Band Mo

l Island 1993

When The QSL Photo Was Taken.


OM FRANCE.
MACS, MASHED
S AND A LARGE
LATE SHAKE
TES AFTER I HIT
NOLULU!
I WONDER WHAT THE WEATHER IS LIKE IN GHANA RIGHT NOW?
EUROPEAN PILEUPS HAVE THE MOST
ISCIPLINE LIKE HELL!
WE HAVE SUMMERS LIKE THIS IN THE NETHERLANDS.
YES I HAVE A SEAGULL ON MY HEAD.
KINGMAN REEF HAD BETTER AMBIANCE.
PA3DUU
UT CUSHCRAFT
A KENWOOD
PANAMAX
I.C.E.
A COMM. CENTER

4UEE, F6EXV, ON6TT, K0EU, PA3DUU, W9IXX, K9AJ.

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DXbase Version 2.0

Long Term Observations - by KØCS

Editors Note: Most Dxers have been utilizing computer logging in their stations for many years. This review is designed for the newcomer that has not yet made the commitment and is based on almost one years experience with the product while using a modest 640K, 286 AT Clone that could be purchased today for 10-20 percent it's original price - around $200,00.

One of the few things that a personal computer does really well is archive ham radio log information. Some truly world class software exists today that will allow the active Dxer to take control of his or her hobby.

The personal computer industry is going into another new phase keyed by Windows NT™ (I've had a beta version for six months.) and multi-media software. This technology will require 8 - 16 megabytes of RAM and a 486-66 mhz. processor for entry level activity. Fortunately, the ham radio enthusiast doesn't need leading edge items like the *Pentium* processor and gigabytes of hard drive to see if he needs a 9N1 on 40 meters.

More importantly, you will be seeing hundreds of good values on 386 and 486 systems in the coming months and even a 286 system could work satisfactorily.

Last year marked the end of my 21 year streak of participating in the CQWWDX Contest. Due to my role as a typesetter for two weekly newspapers, I was meeting deadlines during both the Phone and CW weekends so that some bills could be paid.

When you miss a lengthy, focused event like this your mind actually seeks out some kind of similar activity to replace it. In my case it was the installation of *DXbase Version 2.0*, a computer logging software, developed by *Scientific Solutions, Inc.*, of Woodstock, California.

Installation - Like most DOS products I found the installation of the software on my hard drive to be predictable. The program would not run at all after it was installed. This was the first test for *Scientific Solutions* - could they help me install the program?

I called the help line at the designated time and got the surprise of my life. There was a real person on the phone who actually knew something about the installation process. We talked about config sys, auto exec. bat and pathing and within ten minutes we had the software running. This guy was good!

That was my first and last call to *Scientific Solution's* help line. The actual use of the program is very intuitive and the 173 page manual is excellent. No crashes or lockups - ever!

Initialization - Most of these logging programs have a preliminary step that allows you to set the program defaults. This list is pretty detailed as *DXbase* even lets you default the band and mode that you use most often so that it is selected right at start up.

If you are connected to packet you should have all of your TNC data available for completing this initialization process.

Your exact latitude and longitude is also critical, so be sure you have that information handy when initializing the software.

You would also be wise to check your computer's setup utility program and make sure that the time and date of your clock matches WWV, as *Dxbase* defaults to real time in the logging window.

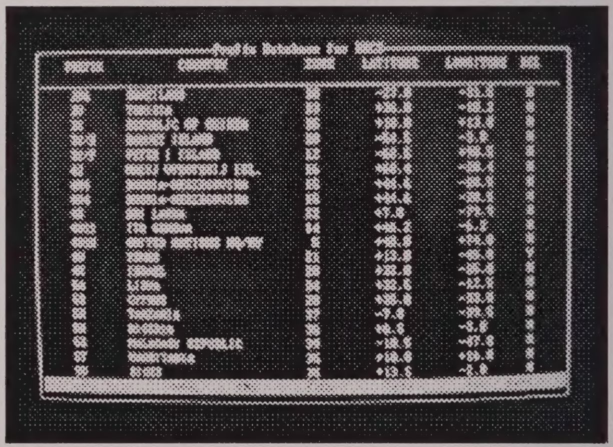
Paying Your Data Entry Dues - You buy one of these software packages so that you can determine your country, zone, state, oblast and I.O.T.A. needs on a band by band basis. This step is not simple for anyone as you have to enter all of the data by hand.

Dxbase will allow you to import files from many other software packages, but I chose a strategy of initially loading confirmed band countries first, then loading needed countries worked. Obviously, some owners will want to enter everything. No problem, but I recommend that you start with the QSL's first, because once the entry is made on a confirmed contact you won't have to perform any maintenance on the entry again.

I have stored my QSL's in alphabetical order, broken out by band for years, so I was able to enter all my confirmed countries by individual band. This saved a lot of time as I could take advantage of the band and mode defaults most of the time.

I started with 10 meters and handled the process like you would when entering log data into *K1EA's CT*™ Contest software, except my rates were faster and I didn't have to worry about breaking a pileup. Data entry sure is easy when KØRF, K5UR, and other competition is not around!

After completing my somewhat embarrassing 10 meter entries (only 240 confirmed), I moved on to the 15 meter band QSL's, the 20 meter QSL's, and so on, until all confirmed countries are in the database.



This is the database that sets up your sunrise and sunset times. When a new country is established for DXCC you simply enter the prefix, name, zone, lat., and long. The distance. beam heading and sunrise/sunset times will then appear on the logging screen for the new prefix.

The only problem I encountered was that some of my older prefixes were so obscure that they did not appear in the *DXbase* country list.

When that occurs, you simply toggle over to the master country list and look up the correct prefix that you need and enter the offending prefix with a */correct prefix* and all is well.

You can also modify the master list as new countries emerge and remove deleted countries. This step is really quite simple, but you should be sure that you have the new countries latitude and longitude handy, because this parameter is needed for computing distance, sunrise and sunset times.

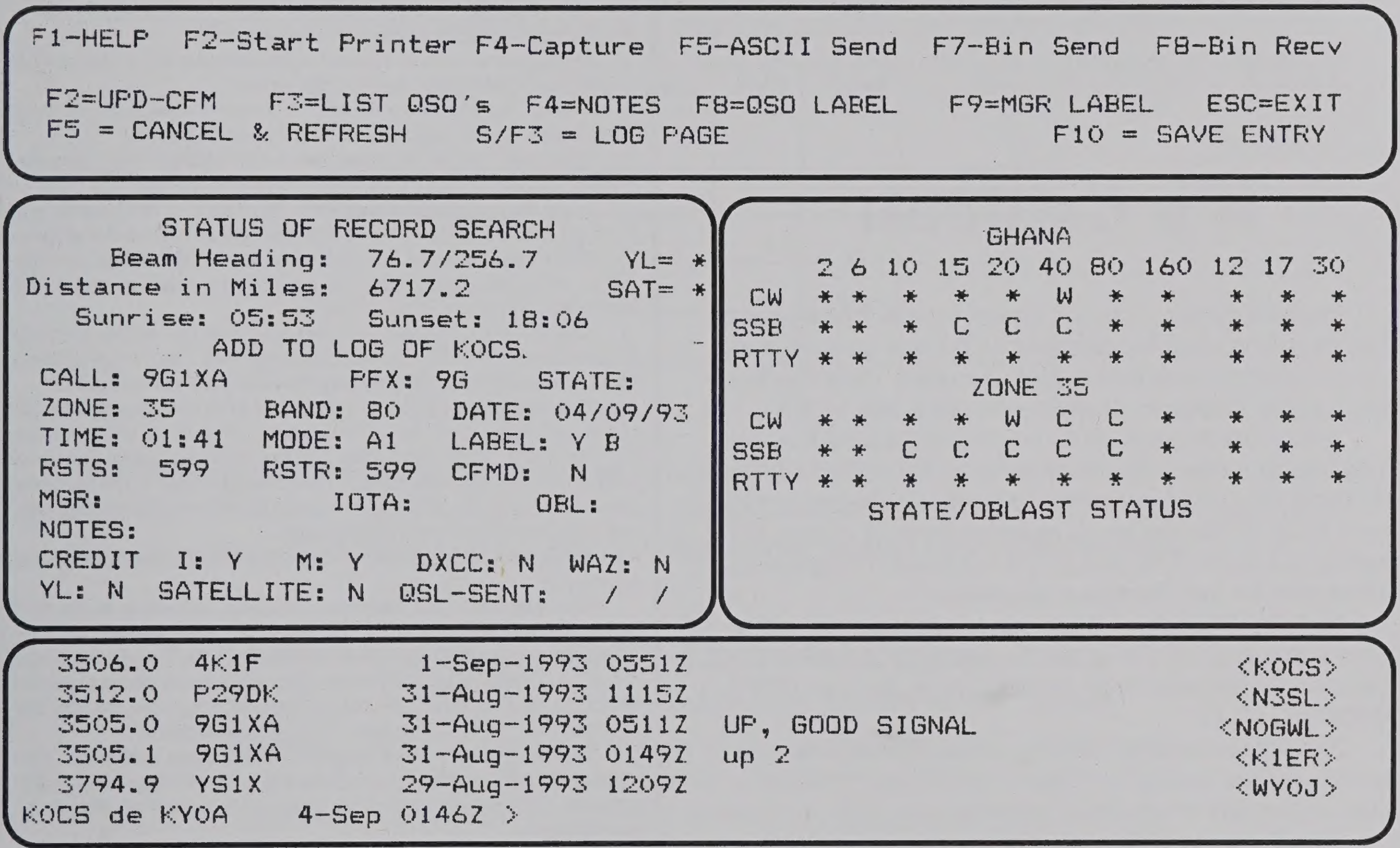
DXbase uses the F10 key to write the log data onto your hard drive. This is somewhat awkward at first, but it gives you a moment to check your entry.

Before you push the F10 key be sure that you have the band, mode, time and dates correct. You can exploit the defaults to reduce your keystrokes, but if you are a purist, you'll probably want to enter all the 339 and 44 reports.

QSL Benefits - The process of entering all of this data had some immediate benefits as I discovered that I had not bothered to QSL some fairly good contacts.

I had forgotten to QSL Tunisia on 40 meters in 1981 and Bangladesh on 40 meters in 1992 for example, along with dozens of other keepers on other bands.

DXbase has an extensive QSL database installed and I was pleased to receive the 3V8AA card from ISØLYN (after a decade) in two weeks. This dedicated manager was in the *DXbase* QSL Manager file.



```
F1-HELP  F2-Start Printer F4-Capture  F5-ASCII Send  F7-Bin Send  F8-Bin Recv

 F2=UPD-CFM   F3=LIST QSO's  F4=NOTES  F8=QSO LABEL   F9=MGR LABEL   ESC=EXIT
 F5 = CANCEL & REFRESH    S/F3 = LOG PAGE                  F10 = SAVE ENTRY
```

```
      STATUS OF RECORD SEARCH
    Beam Heading:  76.7/256.7     YL= *
Distance in Miles:  6717.2        SAT= *
   Sunrise: 05:53   Sunset: 18:06
         ADD TO LOG OF KOCS.
 CALL: 9G1XA        PFX: 9G    STATE:
 ZONE: 35      BAND: 80    DATE: 04/09/93
 TIME: 01:41   MODE: A1    LABEL: Y B
 RSTS:  599    RSTR: 599   CFMD:  N
 MGR:              IOTA:        OBL:
 NOTES:
 CREDIT   I: Y    M: Y    DXCC: N   WAZ: N
 YL: N  SATELLITE: N  QSL-SENT:   /  /
```

```
                    GHANA
       2  6  10  15  20  40  80  160  12  17  30
 CW    *  *  *   *   *   W   *   *    *   *   *
SSB    *  *  *   C   C   C   *   *    *   *   *
RTTY   *  *  *   *   *   *   *   *    *   *   *
                   ZONE 35
 CW    *  *  *   *   W   C   C   *    *   *   *
SSB    *  *  C   C   C   C   C   *    *   *   *
RTTY   *  *  *   *   *   *   *   *    *   *   *
             STATE/OBLAST STATUS
```

```
  3506.0  4K1F          1-Sep-1993 0551Z                               <KOCS>
  3512.0  P29DK        31-Aug-1993 1115Z                               <N3SL>
  3505.0  9G1XA        31-Aug-1993 0511Z  UP, GOOD SIGNAL             <NOGWL>
  3505.1  9G1XA        31-Aug-1993 0149Z  up 2                         <K1ER>
  3794.9  YS1X         29-Aug-1993 1209Z                               <WYOJ>
KOCS de KYOA    4-Sep 0146Z >
```

After entering 9G1XA into the call field and hitting the tab key, DXbase gives me this screen. Heading, sunrise, sunset, distance and my pitiful history of working Ghana in the past. Notice that I have the packet cluster below in a small window. By toggling ALT-P the packet window takes up the whole screen for bulletins or other functions. Another ALT-P returns to the logging screen.

Paying Your Still In the Log Dues - Confirmed countries appear as a C on your computer display. Once entered, the next step is to go back into your log book and enter everything that you have worked but not confirmed.

This process is similar and actually requires less key strokes because you will obviously not have to move to the confirmed field and enter a Y. The only difficulty I had is remembering to select the right band and mode each time, where with the QSL's I would typically have long runs of a single band and mode. These not confirmed entries appear on your display as a W.

If you choose, you can flag any contact that has a QSL card sent, but not yet received. You can also note the stations QSL manager with the entry and remember that *DXbase* has a built in QSL manager data base! Always check it first!

Rag Chewing Benefits - You have the option of entering a large amount of additional data with every entry to the log. A few examples: *Wife's name is Bertha. He was a WangV.P - works at Denny's as a busboy.* You get the idea.

Real Time Benefits - When you enter a call in the QSO field *DXbase* will display all of your band information for that country on the display, to let you know if you have worked the country before. You simply toggle the tab key past the prefix field and the data appears.

More importantly *DXbase* displays the beam heading, distance, sunrise and sunset time for the country. This information can be extremely useful in setting a schedule or knowing where you are (pre or post peak) in the actual band opening.

Low band Dxers will find that this feature alone is worth the price of the software. Just remember to keep your computer's clock set to WWV.

The time field is in UTC, so if you work the station, the time will be logged automatically, as soon as you push the F10 key.

Report Generation - The report generation capability of *DXbase* is impressive. You can generate a DXCC worked list, confirmed list, and needed list for any band or mode selected.

You can use copies of your list to either intimidate or gain sympathy from your fellow DXers. These lists are useful in checking the accuracy of the DXCC QSL checkers printout you receive from Newington.

The software can also generate QSL labels for you, but I will typically only use labels for contest QSO's, so I have not used the utility.

Remember This!

```
COPY \DXB20\*.DB A:
```

It's Critical!

Packet Features - The DX cluster window appears at the bottom of the screen. The command ALT-P puts the window on the screen for checking in or making an enquiry. You get back to your logging window by simply toggling back with ALT-P.

DXbase has the provision for programming a number of "hot keys" for frequently used commands like "C K0ABC" (ALT-F8) or "sh/dx" (ALT-F9) for example. A powerful alert feature for new band countries can also be set up for all bands (2 through 160 meters) and modes (CW, SSB RTTY and mixed. You just select a Y or an N for each band/mode in question.

Back Up Discipline - When you exit *Dxbase* you will be advised to backup all of your data files to floppy. Assuming you have placed a formatted floppy in your Drive A, just type : COPY \DXB20*.DB A:

This will backup all of your files to a disk. You may even want to make another backup - you can never have too many backup disks of your hard fought DXCC countries.

More Features - *DXbase* also has the ability to track Satellite and WAS information which is useful to many DXers. A YL field is also available to those who flag YL contacts.

Conclusion - I have been using *DXbase* for about a year with a lowly 286 AT Clone with only 640K of RAM and a monochrome monitor. It has run flawlessly. I have also used *DXbase* on a Super VGA monitor with .28 dot pitch with a 486-50 mhz and can only say that it was even more impressive in full color. The processing speed wasn't bad either!

The price of a 286 AT Clone system like mine is currently around $200.00 or less if you shop around. *Dxbase* will cost you around $90.00 and represents excellent value for a software package with this many features.

This would be an inexpensive and excellent way to finally take control of your hobby and exploit an application that a personal computer can do quite well.

DXbase is offered by *Scientific Solution, Inc.* 736 Cedar Creek Way, Woodstock, GA 30188. Their latest version was introduced at this years Dayton Hamvention™. We will do a follow-up review next year.

A Realistic Approach To Buying A Computer

The personal computer has in general been a big disappointment to both the business and individual customer since its introduction over a decade ago. What's your criteria? Heresy you say!

Since the introduction of the technology in the early eighties we have gone through one continuous evolution after another in this field and have seen a lot of improvements in speed, applications and of course cost.

But what have we accomplished?

Do our businesses run more efficiently since the advent of the computer? *"I'd like to take your order, but the computer is down."*

Have they eliminated paperwork? *"I have to keep hard copies of all my E-mail because I've ran out of disk space."*

Do they save us time? *"I have to work late tonight, we have to back up the hard drive and replace our file server."*

Have they improved our health? *"My son is nearsighted and thirty pounds overweight, but man can he play Mario Brothers."*

Have they improved ethics and responsibility? *"Our computer models tell us that your home is not located on the fault line."*

Have they improved education? *"Welcome to McDonalds, just push the blue button and the Big Mac icon will appear on the screen."*

When the history of the decline of the United States is finally written the personal computer will probably be listed as one of the factors that brought about our downfall.

Lets compare the personal computer with two simple products you are familiar; barbed wire and the refrigerator. Yes, I'm going to put barbed wire and refrigerators up against the personal computer!

Good old barbed wire probably did more to bring this country out of the dark ages than any other product. Prior to its existence the average farmer might have thirty percent of his net worth tied up in fencing and he had to destroy a couple of forests to get it. The barb wire industry truly contributed to the progress of this country in a big way, both economically and environmentally.

Barbed wire actually set the stage for products like railroads and automobiles.

The refrigerator has added convenience and safety to our food consumption in both the home and restaurant environments and has eliminated much of the concern associated with the long term storage of food, to literally millions of people. Except for some ozone depletion effects caused by the CFC's used in manufacturing, this industry has contributed to the overall quality of life with distinction.

The refrigerator set the stage for products like Budweiser, Diet Coke and Rocky Road Ice Cream, some of the finer things in life. A little product called the air conditioner was a direct result of refrigerator development.

Can we say this about the personal computer? No we cannot. The personal computer will go down in history as one of the biggest worldwide product scams in modern history.

What is the personal computer setting the stage for? Video communications? Electronic Banking? Virtual Reality? Interactive Movies? No! No! No! And No again! The personal computer you buy today isn't setting the stage for anything, because it's going to be obsolete in less than a year.

If you think that your current system is going to run Multi-Media or even step up to MicroSoft Windows NT you are in for a big surprise.

The next time you look at a 486 system with a local buss, CD ROM, sound card and a gigabyte hard drive that's on sale for $2995.00, ask yourself these questions. Will this machine increase my net worth by 30 percent, like barbed wire did for the farmer? Will it save our forests? Will it eliminate food poisoning? Will it keep my beer cold?

No, the personal computer will never be able to measure up to either of these products and it never will. To most people, there is more utility and value in a four function calculator or a hair dryer.

DOS, Windows, Macintosh, or Commodore it's all a scam when compared to barbed wire and refrigerators.

Select dedicated applications for your computer like computer logging. Buy your system used, perhaps two generations past the current models at 10 to 20 percent of original cost and run the hell out of them.

I can sell you a 286 AT motherboard for $50.00.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

We are finally approaching the beginning of the DX Season. It is time to establish some serious reporting criteria for our subscribers so that we can identify the true achievers.

160 Meter Incentives!

Send Us a List for your first 160 meter **Worked All Continents** between September 15, 1993 and April 15, 1994 and receive an incredible recognition certificate and a months additional subscription!

CONTINENT	CALL	DATE	TIME	SENT	RECEIVE	
AFRICA						
ASIA						
EUROPE						
N. AMERICA						
OCEANIA						
S. AMERICA						

We will list the calls each month for those that made the grade and will award the first W.A.C. (based on the oldest date in the period) a new *Casio DC-7500 Data Bank.* No QSL's required - just work the stations and send us the data.

80 Meter Incentives!

Anyone working 100 Countries on the 80 Meter Band between September 15, 1993 and April 15, 1994 will receive an incredible recognition certificate. The **first** station to QSO 100 different countries within the period on 80 meters will receive a new *Casio DC-7500 Data Bank.*
No QSL's required - just your log entry data!

40 Meter Incentives!

Anyone working 150 Countries on the 40 Meter Band between September 15, 1993 and April 15, 1994 will receive an incredible recognition certificate. The **first** station to QSO 150 different countries on 40 meters within the period will receive a new *Casio DC-7500 Data Bank..*
No QSL's required - just your log entry data!

ELIGIBILITY: This exercise is open to all subscribers of the *Low Band Monitor.*
MAIL TO: *Low Band Monitor*, P.O. Box 1047, Elizabeth, CO 80107

LOW BAND MONITOR POWER SPOTS - AUGUST, 1993

TNX: N8HTT - W8TN - KY0A - KD7SO - N0BIW - VE7BS

160 METERS

1821.5	AH6MM/WH9	7-Sep-1993	1231Z
1822.2	AH9B	6-Sep-1993	1008Z
1837.8	FK8CP	5-Sep-1993	1100Z
1827.0	9G1XA	5-Sep-1993	0125Z
1834.0	**CT1AOZ**	**4-Sep-1993**	**0527Z**
1832.2	GD4BEG	1-Sep-1993	0509Z
1827.0	9G1XA	30-Aug-1993	0542Z
1832.0	OK1DOT	29-Aug-1993	0207Z
1829.0	F6CNI	29-Aug-1993	0139Z
1832.6	DJ7HZ	29-Aug-1993	0133Z
1833.0	DJ8WL	29-Aug-1993	0124Z
1827.0	9G1XA	28-Aug-1993	0553Z
1807.6	HP1AC	26-Aug-1993	0014Z
1832.0	VK6ABL	16-Aug-1993	1206Z
1832.0	VK4YB	14-Aug-1993	1205Z
1837.0	ZP5JCY	5-Aug-1993	0245Z
1832.0	PY0TM	3-Aug-1993	0314Z
1833.8	G3PQA	2-Aug-1993	0426Z
1837.9	TI4CF	2-Aug-1993	0318Z
1828.6	GI3OQR	2-Aug-1993	0252Z

160 METER NOTES

- Received a brief summary from Bob, VE7BS regarding the VK4YB, South East Australia to North America Communications Exchange (S.E.A.N.C.E.) Net activity for 1993. The net ran for 92 days at 1.832 mz. and had 1,032 check-ins during the period. Two way communications was maintained each day with some drama.
  - When his TR-7 went down, the net was called using an Atlas transceiver from Roger's car.
  - When the power failed he called the net with batteries without being able to see his rig.
  - His worse check-in report was a 2x9 plus 15 db with static at 30 db over, to WA0ZHH.
  - The last state-side check in was NW0O, of Boulder, Colorado on Friday, August 13th.
- Bob's method of recording this band opening is first class and will be discussed in a future issue.

- Operators who have been trying to work Randy, 9G1XA are advised that he is typically working 12 hours a day and that his operating time is limited. His best 160 meter opening was on the 5th of September. He was notified on 80 meters that the Boulder "A" Index had shifted upward at 0115Z, and immediately QSYed to 1827.0, where he worked most of the faithful east of the Mississippi River. QSL to K0EU.

- The St. Paul Island CY9R operation has not delivered a workable signal on the 160 meter band as of September 7th. This Toronto, based operation has been heard, but no confirmed two ways have been reported. QSL to VE3MRN

- The Cal-Poly-San Louis Obispo Wake Island group has been worked on 160 meters with big signals on September 6th. The calls will be portable KH9 for the various participants with activity planned for all bands. QSL to KC6CEX

80 METERS

3506.0	T30DP	7-Sep-1993	1256Z
3509.0	CY9R	7-Sep-1993	0315Z
3791.6	AH6ML/NH9	6-Sep-1993	1202Z
3506.2	AH6ML/NH9	6-Sep-1993	1118Z
3792.3	**AH9B**	**3-Sep-1993**	**1149Z**
3798.7	OM3CBU	2-Sep-1993	0136Z
3799.0	VK6ACY	1-Sep-1993	1055Z
3506.5	ZS5LB	1-Sep-1993	0356Z
3505.0	9G1XA	31-Aug-1993	0149Z
3800.0	V73C	29-Aug-1993	1118Z
3797.4	4N7M	29-Aug-1993	0358Z
3794.1	S59AB	29-Aug-1993	0208Z
3798.8	YS1X	29-Aug-1993	0235Z
3505.1	9G1XA	29-Aug-1993	0210Z
3794.4	YU1AVQ	29-Aug-1993	0132Z
3505.1	9G1XA	29-Aug-1993	0042Z
3794.6	OZ8BV	28-Aug-1993	2346Z
3799.5	VK5GN	28-Aug-1993	1127Z
3795.5	VK3AJJ	28-Aug-1993	1108Z
3516.0	SV1AOZ	28-Aug-1993	0422Z
3794.0	YS1RRD	28-Aug-1993	0340Z
3508.1	RB5BA	28-Aug-1993	0337Z
3791.0	T77T	28-Aug-1993	0337Z
3799.9	YO5ODE	28-Aug-1993	0329Z
3793.9	YU1ADP	28-Aug-1993	0326Z
3794.0	OK1DXZ	27-Aug-1993	0334Z
3796.9	HP3FL	27-Aug-1993	0329Z
3505.0	9G1XA	27-Aug-1993	0211Z
3506.0	PA0WKI	22-Aug-1993	0444Z
3793.1	HK1HHX	22-Aug-1993	0440Z
3793.0	I8UDB	22-Aug-1993	0240Z
3799.0	DL9AWI	22-Aug-1993	0229Z
3799.0	4O4D	22-Aug-1993	0227Z
3795.0	4O9W	22-Aug-1993	0212Z
3794.6	SM5EDX	22-Aug-1993	0124Z
3785.0	OZ6PI	22-Aug-1993	0055Z
3791.0	TI4CF	22-Aug-1993	0024Z
3798.7	OZ8BV	22-Aug-1993	0003Z
3798.4	FM5WD	19-Aug-1993	0246Z
3794.9	FJ/I4UFH	19-Aug-1993	0151Z
3505.0	9M2AX	18-Sep-1993	1215Z
3795.0	Z31PK	15-Aug-1993	0353Z
3798.7	SM5EDX	15-Aug-1993	0205Z
3790.0	5N0MVE	15-Aug-1993	0142Z
3795.0	OK1DXZ	14-Aug-1993	0343Z
3792.0	VP9HE	14-Aug-1993	0305Z
3794.6	OM3CBU	14-Aug-1993	0241Z
3794.9	YU1MJK	12-Aug-1993	0129Z
3793.2	PZ1EL	9-Aug-1993	0408Z
3799.8	S52AA	9-Aug-1993	0348Z
3796.2	Z31PK	9-Aug-1993	0340Z
3799.6	OY1HJ	9-Aug-1993	0025Z
3791.0	4O9W	8-Aug-1993	0250Z
3792.0	Z31PK	7-Aug-1993	0339Z
3506.2	E31A	7-Aug-1993	0306Z
3506.0	E31A	7-Aug-1993	0217Z
3800.0	7Q7XX	5-Aug-1993	0402Z
3792.8	YV5FGL	5-Aug-1993	0359Z
3501.0	CX4SS	5-Aug-1993	0328Z
3504.4	V44KJ	5-Aug-1993	0247Z
3792.0	F6GSM	5-Aug-1993	0224Z
3501.0	PY0TM	3-Aug-1993	0236Z
3794.7	OY1HJ	3-Aug-1993	0044Z
3791.7	7Q7XX	2-Aug-1993	0026Z
3509.4	ZS0PI	2-Aug-1993	0000Z
3797.0	TU5DX	1-Aug-1993	2339Z
3501.1	PY0TM	1-Aug-1993	0112Z
3797.0	TU5DX	1-Aug-1993	0052Z

40 METERS

7002.0	ZA1J	2-Sep-1993	0255Z
7002.3	ES1WN	2-Sep-1993	0253Z
7023.1	9G1XA	2-Sep-1993	0020Z
7002.4	9H3PB	1-Sep-1993	0432Z
7004.8	Z32VP	1-Sep-1993	0216Z
7174.0	VK6LK	31-Aug-1993	2313Z
7002.9	9M2AX	31-Aug-1993	1205Z
7011.5	JT1BR	31-Aug-1993	1129Z
7012.0	XU6WV	31-Aug-1993	1110Z
7011.9	9H3PB	31-Aug-1993	0414Z
7023.0	9G1XA	31-Aug-1993	0126Z
7006.3	JT1BR	30-Aug-1993	1221Z
7004.4	RZ3NMW	30-Aug-1993	0156Z
7001.8	UI9AWX	30-Aug-1993	0033Z
7005.7	8J1RL	30-Aug-1993	0009Z
7005.9	9J2MM	29-Aug-1993	2201Z
7008.0	9A1CC	29-Aug-1993	0159Z
7010.4	Z31CN	29-Aug-1993	0131Z
7095.0	HV4NAC	29-Aug-1993	0037Z
7004.5	4K1F	28-Aug-1993	0557Z
7180.0	CE8EIO	28-Aug-1993	0528Z
7012.0	7P8SR	28-Aug-1993	0456Z
7081.0	FR5DX	28-Aug-1993	0314Z
7003.3	HZ1AB	27-Aug-1993	0259Z
7005.0	VQ9QM	25-Aug-1993	1310Z
7002.0	C91Z	25-Aug-1993	0350Z
7006.0	T30DP	24-Aug-1993	1243Z
7009.0	YN/SM0OIG	24-Aug-1993	1102Z
7005.0	ZA1J	24-Aug-1993	0217Z
7008.0	SV1AKX	24-Aug-1993	0110Z
7014.7	RB5ETA	23-Aug-1993	0049Z
7006.1	SV1AKX	23-Aug-1993	0012Z
7013.1	UC2SD	23-Aug-1993	0003Z
7008.7	ZK1XR	22-Aug-1993	0910Z
7015.0	OM3THR	22-Aug-1993	0357Z
7004.7	YO3AC	22-Aug-1993	0226Z
7012.9	OM3CQR	22-Aug-1993	0214Z
7006.0	S57AV	22-Aug-1993	0131Z
7006.2	SV1AKX	22-Aug-1993	0045Z
7010.0	T94US	22-Aug-1993	0024Z
7006.8	T30DP	21-Aug-1993	1244Z
7004.1	4K1F	21-Aug-1993	0355Z
7006.9	7Q7LA	21-Aug-1993	0355Z
7004.0	ZA1W	21-Aug-1993	0253Z
7006.4	ZK1XR	19-Aug-1993	0821Z
7075.0	FR5DX	18-Aug-1993	0259Z
7010.1	4X4UH	18-Aug-1993	0140Z
7004.8	3D2CK	15-Aug-1993	1107Z
7025.0	CY9CWI	14-Aug-1993	0325Z
7007.0	3D2AG	13-Aug-1993	1042Z
7008.9	5R8DG	13-Aug-1993	0302Z
7003.0	HL9RH	12-Aug-1993	1045Z
7004.0	Z31PK	11-Aug-1993	0319Z
7009.0	EX9M	10-Aug-1993	1250Z
7006.0	VK9NS	10-Aug-1993	0956Z
7004.5	KC6IL	9-Aug-1993	1118Z
7005.2	VK9NS	9-Aug-1993	0911Z
7003.9	ZA1W	9-Aug-1993	0253Z
7004.5	4N1Z	8-Aug-1993	0313Z
7070.0	E31A	8-Aug-1993	0211Z
7060.2	E31A	7-Aug-1993	0220Z
7002.7	9A3NC	5-Aug-1993	2356Z
7005.0	**5R8DG**	**5-Aug-1993**	**0320Z**
7003.1	E31A	5-Aug-1993	0142Z
7001.0	PY0TM	1-Aug-1993	2330Z
7002.5	4K1F	1-Aug-1993	0111Z
7006.8	Z31CZ	1-Aug-1993	0121Z
7003.6	PY0TM	1-Aug-1993	0047Z